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Our Contributors :

## An Approach to the Fifth Plan for Tribal Welfare.

B. K. PALIT, I. A. S.

It is generally agreed that, however, much we may augment the outlay in the backward classes sector during the Fifth Plan, no visible impact can be made on the problem within a span of 5 years unless a substantial portion of the general sector outlay is earmarked for it. Although this point regarding supplemental character of the resources in the backward classes sector has been repeatedly emphasised at different levels in the Government of India and the State Governments, no satisfactory formula has so far been evolved. Earmarking of funds on the basis of a certain percentage of the outlay as was attempted in some States may not always be possible nor is perhaps a very convenient method.

2. As a second alternative, the annual plan of a State can be split up into the districts which is being attempted in Orissa for the last 2 or 3 years and from that an approximate indication can be obtained regarding the extent of financial outlay from a particular development department for a district which is either a scheduled area or even otherwise a predominantly tribal area. There are however the

following limitations involved in this approach. (i) Under the existing planning mechanics, a broad indication can be obtained regarding annual plan outlay of a particular development department in respect of a district. If the tribal pocket is somewhat smaller than a district and not necessarily coextensive with a subdivision, it will be difficult to identify the extent of the plan resources from the general sector flowing into this area during the course of a financial year. This would be possible if the detailed planning from the district level is perfected to an extent where even before the implementation of the annual plan begins it would be possible to know which part of the scheme would benefit this region or sub-region within a district. Although attempts at district planning have been initiated, the mechanics of planning has not yet developed to that extent. (ii) Even if an indication of the approximate financial outlay for the annual plan in respect of development department is available for the region, whether the benefit ultimately percolates down to the tribals in that area can be determined only by a detailed physical programming. For exam-

ple, the plan outlay of a crore of rupees on a medium irrigation project in a scheduled district by itself would not indicate the extent to which the tribes of the district have been benefited unless a study of the area cultivated, the extent of utilisation of skilled and unskilled tribal labour for the construction programme, etc., are worked out. This is precisely the reason why, notwithstanding a very heavy investment in 2 or 3 scheduled districts of the State, namely, Kotas and Sundergarh, during the last 18 years, the tribes of these 2 regions have not developed to the desired extent.

3. Therefore, an attempt is made that a substantial portion of the general sector outlay benefits the tribes has to be worked out not in terms of earmarking of financial outlays but in terms of a suitable machinery at the State level and the district level which will make concurrent evaluation of on-going programmes to assess as well as to ensure that a major portion of the benefit goes to the tribes. At the present stage of planning, this exercise is limited to an annual evaluation which is essentially of the nature of a post-mortem. As already indicated, continuous evaluation from this angle at the district level and the State level is a part of the overall improvement in the planning machinery whereby the detailed district planning (both physical and financial) is done before a particular plan scheme is put into operation. Unless detailed district planning and on-site project

appraisal is developed it would be difficult to take up this evaluation with any degree of effectiveness.

4. As regards the resources available within the backward classes sector, certain basic trends as indicated by the development during the last 20 years since the inception of the First Five-Year Plan should be taken into consideration.

5. The trend of development of various categories of Scheduled Tribes over the last two decades, i. e., since the Constitution came into effect and a year later when the First Five-Year Plan was started, would indicate certain *prima facie* instances in the rate of growth of the various communities. The more advanced communities such as Mundas, Oraons and Santhals in Orissa have developed at a much faster pace than the comparatively backward communities like Sanas, Juangs, Dongris, Kondhs and Kutia Kondhs, etc. Although special attempts have been made through the various schemes of Tribal & Rural Welfare Department of this State to accelerate the pace of their development, the comparatively advanced communities (both educationally and economically) have tended to take a greater share of the special benefits accruing from these supplemental resources of the Tribal & Rural Welfare Department. There are 42 Scheduled Tribes in Orissa. A comparative study of some of the major tribes in respect of the Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship awarded annually tribe-wise would corroborate this point. The largest and

the most backward tribe in the State, viz., Kondhs have the lowest percentage of literacy and the minimum number of Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship are awarded to this group. The Santhals in Mayurbhanj and the tribes of Sundergarh take by far the largest share of the stipends and scholarships.

6. Similarly if we take the development of the infrastructure, the economic occupation, etc. it would be observed that some of the groups which have been classified as the most backward 'A' category tribes by the State Government, namely, Lanjla Sooras, Juangs, Bondas and Koyas still continue to be practically in the same condition as they were 22 years back. Although schools have been located in the Bonda hill (Koraput) in the Juang-ghir (Keonjhar) for the Dongria Kondhs in Gunpur Subdivision of Koraput district, for Koyas of Malkangiri Subdivision and similar other areas. The enrolment of these boys in the educational institutions is poor and wastage is heavy. There were hardly one or two Bonda boys in the High Schools of Govindpalli in Koraput district and it is not known if they are continuing their studies further.

7. This raises a very fundamental problem, viz., the Constitution of India laid down certain special provisions in respect of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and other backward classes in the matter of reservation in services, educational and economic schemes for their development with a view to enable these backward communities to

catch up with the average citizen of the country. This no doubt still remains a problem. For example, the average literacy in Orissa is 21 per cent according to 1961 census as against which the average literacy of the tribal is 7 per cent. Thus while the problem of catching up with the all-India or all-Orissa average still remains and efforts have to be made to achieve this end, the concept of an average in respect of literacy or economic development among the tribals is becoming a highly academic issue. While 7 per cent is the average literacy of the tribals in Orissa according to 1961 Census, if we take the district-wise average it would appear that districts like Phulbani, Sambalpur, Sundergarh, Dhenkanal are far better off as their literacy is above 10-11 per cent whereas the average in Koraput is 3 per cent. In Ganjam and Keonjhar and Kalahandi it is of the order of 5 per cent. Even within a district if we take smaller groups like Bondas, Koyas, Dongria Kondhs and Kutia Kondhs, etc. the literacy will be practically 0-1 per cent. Thus the average does not reflect the real bottleneck or the critical areas where inadequate development keeps the State average at a low level.

8. Although the resources of the backward classes sector are limited, the basic assumption in the constitution was that as some tribes get more and more developed they can be descheduled or the facilities enjoyed by them can be progressively reduced so that the residuary groups, which constitute the hard core of the problem, receive the major attention in

terms of organisation and resources. However, due to various compulsions inherent in the realities of the existing situation, it can be assumed that this process of descheduling or attempt to concentrate our resources on a smaller list of Scheduled Tribes would not be possible.

8. It is, therefore necessary that from the Fifth Plan and, in fact during the next 15 or 20 years, if the constitutional objectives are to be achieved according to a time-bound programme, attempts should be made to devise separate integrated schemes for the accelerated development of these smaller groups which have special handicaps.

10. These integrated schemes for well identified areas would not imply that tribals who are dispersed in smaller groups in other pockets will not receive any attention. These tribal groups depending on the nature of their concentration will get (i) benefits from the general sector outlay and (ii) where there is substantial tribal concentration not covered by an existing T. B. Block, the question of starting a sub-Block can be taken up. The major part of the resources, however, should be for the formulation of integrated schemes for economic development including outlay for social services. The existing pattern of having pilot tribal development projects purely for the economic development of particular areas supplemented by additional resources for social services to be made available separately is not a very satisfactory approach in as much as the problem of a tribal

village is an integrated one and unless the economic programme also takes cognizance of a certain minimum social amenities, the desired results cannot be achieved. It is necessary that the schemes to be formulated during the Fifth Plan for backward areas, to be identified for the purpose should be integrated and composite schemes taking into consideration the totality of the life of a tribal as a part of the village community.

11. A question sometimes arises in the context of the formulation of plans for backward pockets as to whether it should be an area development plan or a plan for the development of a particular tribal community. There is no basic dichotomy in this twin approach. If a particular tribal group is scattered over a large area it is not possible to evolve any satisfactory plan for the development of this community as one integrated plan. It is only if a substantial portion of this tribal community inhabit a well identified and compact geographical area, a suitable composite scheme for their development can be worked out. It will be in certain respects, an area development, for example, regarding infrastructure or in the provision of social overheads but, in terms of specific economic schemes, it has to be an individualised approach for the development of that tribal community. In this respect, it would be somewhat analogous to the S.F.D.A. and M.F.A.L. which involves identification of beneficiaries and providing them with the necessary assistance to improve their condition. In States like Orissa, Madhya

Prodeah, Bihar, Andhra it is possible to identify such well-defined regions of very backward tribal communities which can constitute one viable administrative unit for implementation of programmes.

12. Successful formulation of an integrated plan of this nature and implementation of these programmes would depend largely on providing a suitable machinery for the purpose. The Pilot Tribal Development Projects which have been started are registered societies with Collectors as the Chairmen and officials and non-officials as members. They receive grants from the Government of India directly. It provides for a nucleus staff on the assumption that the other extension staff would be provided by the various development departments and their field Agencies. Thus the success of this Agency would be proportionate to the measure of co-ordination which the Collector and the Project Director are able to secure from other development Agencies. Secondly it would also depend on ensuring that sufficient allocations from other development departments are made available in the project area to supplement nucleus funds of the project and particularly the social services aspects of the programme not included within the scheme of the Tribal Development Agency are also provided in adequate measure by the concerned departments.

13. The pattern adopted by the Developmental Development Authority envisages a more liberal

staffing pattern. Commissioner for Scheduled Caste and Tribe in one of his annual reports had suggested adoption of this approach for Tribal Development Programmes as well.

14. In Andhra, Regional Development Boards have been set up for the purpose of formulation of plans. It would be desirable to consider the possibility of having a more comprehensive Tribal Development Agency which would receive funds from the State Government as well as from the general sector and the backward classes sector and commercial financing institutions and take up intensive work in those areas in respect of the 4 or 5 major heads of development including social services. This would incidentally help in ensuring more intensive supervision by securing the services of a few selected officers from the various development departments with proper orientation and giving them suitable financial incentive and retaining them for this work for a minimum period. Since these officers have to work under various physical handicaps in isolated areas it is necessary to provide them with the necessary monetary incentive for this special nature of assignment. If the implementation of project depends very largely on the field staff of various development departments in the project area, it is difficult to grant special incentives without creating problems of cadre management. This is the main problem in the

Pilot Tribal Development Projects which have been taken up during the Fourth Plan.

15. As regards formulation of the plan for the project it is to be preceded by a detailed survey of the requirements of the area. The census data (1961) in respect of some of the backward tribes are quite comprehensive but the limitation is that it is based on a 20 per cent sample. The 1971 Census data is not yet available. When a project report is to be formulated on an individualistic approach, identification of beneficiaries and their problems have to be worked out in the project report so that the scheme can be formulated accordingly. The land holding pattern, the extent to which this can be put to intensive agricultural operation, the extent to which it can be supplemented

by subsidiary occupation like animal husbandry, handicrafts, etc. the extent of indebtedness, the scope for processing all minor forest produce and how far an organisation like the Tribal Development Co-operative Society in Orissa or the Grijan Corporation of Andhra Pradesh or the Madhyapradesh Tribal Development Corporation can help in these efforts, the scope for starting small or medium industries and advanced planning to train up the tribals in these areas to avail of these benefits have to be worked out and funds released to the Agency both from the State Government and from the Government of India for implementation of this project. Unless funds are pooled and an organisation is built up for this selective approach it will be difficult to make any dent on the problem during the next 15 or 20 years.



## The Concept of Primitive.

DR. KULAMANI MOHAPATRA

This paper is concerned with the concept of 'primitive' as it is employed in anthropology and to certain extent in sociology as well. This is a topic which is both preliminary and fundamental for understanding the problems of the primitive tribes. Even at the present stage of maturity of the scientific study of the tribal problems there is a lot of controversy about the definition of the term 'primitive'. As yet the concept lacks precision and there is a lot of confusion in the fields of sociological as well as applied research. It is therefore necessary that the topic should be discussed at some length.

The idea of the 'primitive' is as old as civilization. The civilized man in his efforts at discovering his own genesis has always tried to locate or imagine a way of life completely different from his own which he has termed as 'primitive'. Conversely primitive societies on their part have not generated what may be termed as a definite idea or conception of civilization. This is not because the primitive people have no sense of history and development. They have certainly very clear notion of

development and progress. But as Stanley Diamond observes "a history to them is the recital of sacred messages within a cycle as opposed to a linear perception of time. The merely pragmatic event, uninvolved with the sacred cycle, falls as it were out side history, because it is of no importance in maintaining or revitalizing the traditional forms of society."

1.1    2.1    3.1    4.1    5.1  
The primitive people have no secular sense of history and no linear idea and hence no prophetic idea of social progress". (Diamond, 1964, V).

There are certain commonly agreed characteristics which are associated with the primitive people. These are (1) absence of a written language, (2) a relatively simple technology, (3) social institutions which are cast in a simple mould, (4) smaller numbers, (5) relative isolation and (6) societies whose cultures are in general characterised by a slower rate of change. There is hardly any controversy as far as these characteristics are concerned. Controversies abound when the basic differences between the primitive and the civilized are sought to be

thrashed out with the implicit belief that these differences are absolute and unaccountable. It is therefore necessary first to give a historical sketch of the concept of primitive, as it has developed in anthropology and then to discuss a dominant example of the controversial themes.

The early anthropologists, who were strongly influenced by the evolutionist theory of the unilinear school, worked under the belief that primitives represented the back waters in the stream of evolution. This notion was upheld with regard to the culture and, sometimes in addition to it, to the biological status of the primitive people. After the turn of the century and anti-evolutionist trend was perceptible and anthropologists like Elliot Smith attempted to explain almost all cultural elements from one source—Egypt. This extreme form of diffusionism was succeeded by the *Kulturkreis* school. Anthropologists of this school consider the peoples of the world as products of several core cultures which spread over the entire world after attaining essential characteristics in the Old World, especially in Asia. As these basic cultures spread, new elements were added and others lost, but in every case enough of the original complex remained so that each could be identified.

The American historical school "emphasized the study of non-literate cultures from within, from the view point of the members of the society rather than from that of the observer" (Dorsey, 1958, 191). The concept of

the non-literate as mentally inferior and as an individual incapable of surmounting his "lowly level" was specifically challenged by Franz Boas in "The Mind of the Primitive Man". Boas demonstrated that the lowly position is merely the result of an ethnocentric comparison on the basis of one standard, i.e., the anthropologist's own culture.

The view of the British anthropologists are almost similar to their American counterparts but they also differ on some vital points. Contrasted with the American school, they deal with a narrower range of cultural phenomena within a structural-functional framework. They are gradually becoming conscious of history, yet their analysis is still devoid of historical depth.

After this historical review I will conclude the paper after a brief discussion of the most dominant tendency usually associated with the concept of 'primitive' i.e., the unaccountable difference between the civilized and the primitive.

The idea of a 'primitive mentality' inferior to that of the civilized was developed by Levy Bruhl. Though controverted by empirical findings over fifty years the idea is still in vogue, especially among administrators and the lay public. Levy Bruhl spoke of a "prelogical mentality" of primitive people whose life is supposed to be determined by the law of participation—a concept which he had taken over from Durkheim. According to him the members of primitive societies, do not experience them-

selves as separate individuals, they and the objects of their world appear to them sometimes as the same, sometimes as others.

As a Heinz Werner explains the concept of 'primitive' in terms of social potential (page 105), according to him 'primitive' does not simply mean that which chronologically comes first. Primitive is that which lacks greater differentiation and is comparable to childhood phenomena. The equating of childhood phenomena with primitive is completely erroneous as findings in the ontogenetic development of human beings cannot be compared with those in phylogenetic sequences. Werner made comparison of phenomena observed in different stages of development related to a neglecting the variance of comparison.

Another mistaken notion of 'primitive' is to assume the lack of abstract behaviour among the primitive people. The normal behaviour of human beings is characterised by two kinds of approaches to the world: the concrete behaviour and the abstract behaviour. This can be illustrated by an example. When we feel sleepy and go to bed, we act concretely: often without being aware of what we are doing. The reaction is based on the after effect of previous equal situations. If, however, we reflect that by going to sleep early we might embarrass someone who had to read late in the night and thus refrain from going to bed, we approach the situation abstractly. The addition of any performance presupposes the abstract attitude.

Again if anything goes wrong in the concrete activity the abstract attitude is taken to correct the mistake. Patients with impairment of abstract attitudes show definite failures in all situations to which we can come to terms only by the abstract approach. It, therefore, goes without saying that a society cannot survive if all the members show concrete behaviour alone. Some scholars like Aron have tried to explain that the lack of abstract behaviour in primitive societies is compensated by the support of the authority of the tribe. This authority consists of codes of conduct in which it is stated that the individual has no need of any abstract behaviour but the framing of such an elaborate code of conduct presupposes a superior mentality with abstract capabilities. Besides acting by concrete behaviour alone is not possible—however rich the background may be. It is therefore established that both in civilized and primitive societies, concrete and abstract behaviour are necessary components of human nature. But there is a difference. The abstract attitude finds its expression in primitive society in the formation of a permanent structure of society in civilized life in certain formations under special conditions.

The foregoing discussion shows that the notion of regarding the primitive people as intrinsically inferior to the civilized should be eradicated from the concept of primitivity. Inferiority is confined to one sphere alone, i.e. technology. It is true that certain forms of social organisation and mental states are associated with primi-

her technology but it has never been shown that these are unambiguous messages. Nor has it been shown that any specific social organization or mental state has any intrinsic desirability. Rather it has clearly

been demonstrated that any type of social organization or technology is capable of producing values, codes of conduct and social ideals which stand against the flux of time.

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# Bejunis; their initiation into Shamanhood.

PRASHANBU SEKHAR DAS  
PATNAIK

## Introduction

The Western part of the district of Koraput of Orissa forms the present habitat of the bulk of the Dongria Kondh tribe. An area of about 250 square miles covered by rugged and precipitous hills and mountains is known as Niyamgiri Hills in the district of Koraput. The entire area is situated at an average elevation of about 2,000 feet above the sea level. Mountain ranges attaining 4,000 feet height are not uncommon in this locality. The whole area is diversified in appearance by exposures of naked rocks, ranges of ancient sargi-forest. The whole surface is thrown up into long undulations, the ridges of which have been cut into innumerable terraced Denger plots for cultivation.

## Dongria Kondhs and their religion

The inhabitants of this area are known as Dongria Kondhs. Economically they are one of the most backward tribes of Orissa. The core of their religion consists of polytheistic beliefs in the cult of ancestors and a large, malevolent pantheon to be propitiated on innumerable occasions. Their magic is primarily concerned with my-

sterious impersonal forces and powers residing mostly in nature and artificial objects. The instruments employed in dealing with them are principally charms and spells, adjunctional observances and about a few magical rites are organically connected with their normal activities of hunting, fishing and agriculture.

## Religious functionaries and roles of Bejunis.

The religious functionaries who are entrusted with the propitiation of the village deities of the Dongria Kondhs are Jann Bejuni, Guruma and Dishari. The Bejuni occupies a crucial place among them. There are a number of Bejunis, under one Head Bejuni in a village, who performs various religious ceremonies on behalf of the public and participate in communal and individual functions. Besides their public role of the 'shaman', they also practise black-magic in their private capacity to destroy or damage the normalcy of the society and as such they may be termed as sorcerers. She performs her duties in a frenzied style and is believed by the people to be in direct

communication with the gods. By virtue of her position she commands high prestige from the people.

### Qualifications to be Bajans

When a female practices this art, is called 'Bajan' and a male, is called 'Boja'. But in a village, the Bajans always outnumber the Bojas. Generally the old women are eligible to become Bajans though there is no formal age restriction. This is also not a hereditary profession. It is an acquired art and an personal accomplishment. Skill in dancing is essential for a Bajani. It is a preliminary step to appease the Penu, god, and in due course of frenzied dancing, she gets into a trance and in that state makes prophecies and offers solutions to the problems of the clients. Names of different penus are also to be mugged up before becoming a Bajani. She should also know the art of divination with the movement of the winnowing-fan, waving of peacock feathers and suppuration through 'Arus-rice' in the winnowing fan. Simultaneously she must know the nature of sacrifice, to be made for different 'pujas' and for different diseases. To know all these techniques an apprentice undergoes training under a Bajani, called *pat-ber*, or *head-Bajani*. Thus in a village there may be four to five *pat-Bajanis* who impart training to the interested candidates in the evening, after the day's work.

Basic component of a Bajani and respective penus.

The Bajanis are believed to acquire power through the special grace of their own ancestor-spirits or *Penus*. It generally comes to the persons who have a temperament towards it. With the increase of their earnestness or rather yearning and devotion, they begin to pass sleepless nights in contemplation of certain *Penus*. In the village khambad there are nine Bajanis who have got different penus. Arju wadaka's mother worships *penus* like 'Kalia Patu', 'Sunder Patu', 'Kashava Rant', 'Tumba-Rani', 'Nadi Mata' and 'Tumba Mata'. Maide wadaka's wife worships 'Kumita Rani' and 'Baranaka Nani'. Dhimba Jaklabe's wife worships 'Hira Lal' and 'Danda Lal'. Penua Lod-raka wadaka's wife worships '...-Deota' and 'Nis-made'. Arju wadaka's sister worships 'Ladu-Penu' 'Suren' and 'Bai Suren'. Dheda Sikaka's wife worships 'Lepruti', 'Thakrani' and 'Maradi-Deota'.

### Preliminary stage to become Bajani

All these *Penus* are ranked in ancestor-spirits. It is evident from the above discussion that each one has her specific *penu*. Moreover the Bajanis worship female ancestor-spirits and the Bojas worship male ancestor-spirits. But there is no difference among them as far as their power over men and nature is concerned. For days together these different *Penus* are contemplated deeply. *pujans* are made in their

**Winnor Dances** are performed regularly. During these processes, the Bejuni in her dream or in frenzied state visualizes the respective Penis and solicits blessing from them. It is believed that the Penis ordain different sacrifices to be offered to them on various occasions. Once the vision is realized, she is possessed by the spirits frequently and remains in trance. Then the public comes to know that the concerned woman is at the first stage of becoming a Bejuni. At the second stage the Bejuni contracts a spiritual marriage with the Gods. This is done even if the woman is married - her worldly capacity Beja and Bejuni are considered profane and despoiled until such marriage is performed. To gain supernatural power they must enter into conjugal relationship with Penis and therefore they should be married for the second time.

#### **Spiritual marriage** The first ceremony

To perform this type of marriage, a place is selected either near stream or under a mango tree. On the Scheduled date, the concerned Bejuni and her husband go to the marriage site, arranged beforehand after ceremonial bath in turmeric water. The concerned Bejuni becomes her own priest. She carries various articles like a winnowing fan, earthen lamp, resin-powder, Stadi-leaf, arua-rice, frewood, turmeric-powder, mango-leaves and ragi-powder to perform the marriage ceremony. Another Bejuni (under training) also accompanies her. The bride Bejuni puts on a mark of Ragi

powder on her forehead and applies the same on the forehead of her husband. She also catches a handful of Arua-rice. The assistant Bejuni in the meanwhile brings a pitcherful of water from the stream, keeps it under the mango-tree and puts into it a pinch of turmeric powder and leaves sal and tina leaves over it. The funnel of the pitcher is covered with garland of young mango leaves. The bride Bejuni throws handful of arua-rice over it while uttering incantations to Dharam-peni. In the meantime the relatives and friends gather at the spot. The relatives and friends prepare garlands out of young mango leaves and fasten them to the pitcher. The bride Bejuni with the help of the assistant Bejuni invokes the specific penis with whom marriage is to take place, by muttering incantations. While doing that she shivers and develops hysteric fits with the beating of drums. Suddenly with a perceptible jerking she starts dancing and gets into a trance. This is an indication she is possessed by the specific Penis. Her husband then does a sarve and joins his wife in dancing. Various questions are put to her by her friends and relatives which she answers in a state of trance. Immediately when the bride Bejuni starts dancing, the assistant Bejuni feeds arua-rice to a cock and a pigeon for five times. Then she gives arua-rice to the bride Bejuni and her husband and keeps her right hand over their heads. She also starts uttering mantras and moves round the mango tree for 15 times. The process of giving Arua-rice to Bejuni and her husband is repeat-

ed during intervals of each round. The feeding of the cock and the pigeon is also repeated 15 times. It is the process of appeasing the concerned *Penas*. After circum-bulating the mango tree repeatedly a feather is taken out from the pigeon's and cock's and the heads of *Bejun* and her husband and the spectators are touched with it. Immediately after that the pigeon is killed by the assistant. *Bejun* and *Moed* is sprinkled on the pitcher to satisfy the *Pena*. After this sacrifice the bride *Bejun* comes back to her senses and becomes free of the spirit.

### The Second ceremony

After some days the second phase of marriage takes place on a considered auspicious for the occasion. It takes place at the altar of the first ceremony. In this phase the bride *Bejun* stands facing East catching the little finger of her husband. Another assistant, *Bejun* along with the married couple goes round the mango tree for seven times. This circum-bulation is called 'Sai-peda'. After this ceremony new clothes, dyed with turmeric are tied to the head of the bride-*Bejun* and her husband. The people then carry them on their shoulders to the place where the pitchers had been kept. The right foot of the bride *Bejun* is placed on the left foot of her husband. The cock is fed Arun-*rice* for seven times and then the assistant *Bejun* kills it by crushing its head under her feet. The blood is sprinkled over the feet of the bride-*Bejun*. The head of the sacrificed bird is then placed over the pitcher.

### Third ceremony of marriage

The third ceremony then takes place after an interval. During this ceremony the pitcher under the mango tree is taken out and its water is poured over the bride-*Bejun* and her husband. It is regarded as a holy bath during which the *Pena* gets into the body of both of them. Their feet are washed properly and the marriage rituals come to an end. A small feast is arranged after the ceremony. It is believed that the bride *Bejun* hereafter attains the status of shaman equipped with special powers. A dishonoured and disrespected wife.

### The fourth or 'Tapa' ceremony

*Tapa* means sacrifice. This is celebrated only when adequate funds are arranged. It is a very expensive function as a lot of expenditure is incurred to purchase different animals and food accessories to satisfy different ancestors, spirits and also to feed the entire village. The function continues for three days. It may be mentioned here that each *Bejun* has got different *penas* and different animals are prescribed to be sacrificed for each. In this connection the case history of *Melo*, aged 40 the wife of *Jagdi Sikora* may be given.

### MELO'S CASE HISTORY

*Melo* is the worshipper of four *Penas* such as, *Jab Gura*, *Bu<sup>a</sup>*, *Guru*, *Sika-peju* and *Bengrai-peju*. To observe this function she purchased four earthen pitchers, six fowls, three pigeons, one goat, five



karis 'lamb' forty kilogram of rice and other food materials. Before the day of ritual an altar (pat) with an enclosure and temporary leafy shed over it was prepared by the young men and girls (Dhangdas and Dhangdis) of the village.

#### OBSERVANCES ON THE 1ST DAY OF TAPU CEREMONY

On the 1st day about 10 Bejunis who were apprentices came to her house along with pal Bejuni (Hiced Bejuni after taking bath and pal on clothes dyed with turmeric. The Pal Bejuni held a bundle of peacock feather and a winnowing fan and the Bejunis held a winnowing fan each. The musical party also reached the spot. Mako appeared before the public with dishevelled hair. She was wearing a new sarong and had vermilion marks on her forehead. There were chains of tinkling bells on her ankles. She held a handful of warcock feathers. She also held in her hand an earthen pitcher with a narrow neck. This pitcher was full of water and mango leaves had been fastened to it. She handed over the pitcher to one of her apprentices and bestowed a portion of the altar with cowdung. After this she drew up an loon square on the braided place. This was done with a mixture of arua rice powder, flag powder and vermilion. A jump of vermilion was placed at the middle of the square around which another square was drawn up. In

the small square about 7th kilogram of arua rice was strewn and the pitcher was placed upon it. When interrogated it was told that the pitcher represented Jati-Guru Petu a goddess. Jati-Guru is considered to be very powerful. She protects the life and property of the people. She is therefore properly worshipped with the supplication of Arua-rice after which adequate 'Tapu' (Sacrifice) is offered to appease her. The Bejunis (disciples) the pal Bejuni and Mako sat before the pitcher in a row. Pal Bejuni first started uttering incantations and sprinkled water over the visitors to purify them. She offered arua-rice to Mako, then to the warcock fan. Mako also started uttering mantras. Supplication of arua-rice and uttering of magical verses in a low voice started simultaneously. The disciples also joined them. Then the Pal Bejuni raised her voice. Mako followed her and the disciples also started telling the same chained incantations. This continued for half-an-hour after which a fowl, a pig, and a lamb were placed one after the other over the head of Mako and then tied to different poles posted beside the pitcher. After that the Pal Bejuni set fire to the resin powder and threw the same over Mako and on the Pillars. Immediately after this Mako started chattering and danced to the tune of the drum beating. It started with a slow rhythm but became rapid in due course with the quick beating of drums. It was the sign

of the Penn entering in to the body of Majo. The Pat-Bejuni and other women too started shivering and danced with Majo. The Pat-Bejuni dancing with Majo, bent down placed left hand at her waist, waved her head full of peacock feathers and started dancing. The talking of words both of the Bejuni was very loud. During the dance the pat-Bejuni embraced Majo twice and thrice and fed her with powder. Majo gradually became possessed by the spirit of the Penn and nodded her head frantically. The spectators tried to control her but she went on dancing in a frenzied manner till she fell down unconscious. The pat-Bejuni too fell down. Other dancers were restrained by the spectators. After a few minutes they all came to their senses and the last phase of the Puja was initiated by the pat-Bejuni. Majo again supplicated with arusa-rice and muttered the Mantras. The sacrificed animals were again brought one after the other. They were bled and vermillion was put on their heads. After this they were killed by Majo. The fowl and pigeon were again trodden to the head of Majo and then strangled to death by the Pat-Bejuni. Their blood was sprinkled on the pitcher the iron square and also on the head of Majo. The lamb was not killed and tied again at the pole. Puja for the first day was over. It was 3 O'clock in the afternoon when it was completed. A small feast followed. The Mandal (village leader)

Shahmaph, Janti and some relatives cooked rice separately. This was eaten exclusively by Majo, her husband and the Bejuni who participated in the dance.

#### 2ND DAY PERFORMANCE OF PAJI (JEREMANA)

On the 2nd day the same process was repeated with some deviations. On that day another pitcher representing Rudiguri Penn was placed instead of the first one. The first one was placed at the back of the second one. This Penn is believed to bring rain, protect animals and enhance animal wealth. If properly appeased. Hence she must be given Tapa. The Bejuni attain a greater identification with the Penn on the second day than on the first. As on the previous day, two fowls, one pigeon and one lamb were brought. Fowls and one pigeon were killed but the lamb instead of being bled, was set free. The children of the village chased it and drove it out of the village, so that it could not return or even look back. It is believed that the lamb is the messenger who conveys the prayer of the concerned Bejuni to Bodo Guro-Penn. Majo danced twice and became possessed by the spirit. She was applauded and glorified by the spectators. Pat-Bejuni taught Majo 'Pachna' i.e., the art of asking questions to the deity while supplicating with arusa-rice. While asking questions, the answers from the deity are believed

to be clearly audible to the Bejuni. The 2nd day ceremony continued from 8 O' clock morning to 5 O' clock in the evening.

### 3RD DAY PERFORMANCE OF TAPU CEREMONY

On the 3rd day the ceremony started from 4 A.M. in the morning and continued for two hours and was completed before the break of day. Neither the drum, neither nor the public were invited. Only

the Pat-Bejuni and the apprentices were present. At 5 A.M. Mado took bath with other Bejunis, put on a white cloth and came out of the house with the third earthen pitcher. She placed the earthen pitcher in a square drawn with charcoal powder. A black cloth was wrapped over the pitcher. This pitcher represented the spirits, Sika peju and Bengrai peju, who are considered to be very poisonous and bring immense harm to the people.

During this performance the ritual procedure was almost the same as other occasions. Supplication was made with arua rice by the Pat-Bejuni in a whispering fan. This was accompanied with spells and incantations. Two black lobes were kept one after the other on the pitcher. Vermillion marks were painted on them. Arua-rice was also sprinkled over them. This process was repeated for 15 times. A pigeon was brought and the same

procedure was again repeated. Lastly a lamb was brought. The 3rd pitcher was lifted and placed on the back of the lamb and the animal was forced to move round the black square. Then Mado sat on the back of the lamb and rode thrice round the square. After all these rituals, Mado again started supplicating with rice, and began to dance in a frenzied state. At the height of it she started rolling on the floor. The Pat-Bejuni immediately got up and threw a lump of resin-power at her and the apprentices caught hold of her and pressed her on the ground. This frenzied state symbolised her successful statement of the status of Bejuni. When she came to her senses she again supplicated with rice. The Pat-Bejuni while doing this along with Mado, whispered three in her ear. This is called *as* the final lesson taught to the apprentice. The animals and birds for sacrifice killed one after the other. Their blood was sprinkled over the earthen pitchers. The carcasses were left at the altar.

### Performances on the 3rd day

After completing the rituals on the 3rd day Mado, accompanied with Pat-Bejuni and other disciples went to Dharua Pengu of their village and started dancing there. The Pat-Bejuni with other three Bejunis went round the village to ward off the evil-spirits. The evil spirits

are supposed to be invading the village and the Mutha during the three days of the performances. After warding off the evil spirits the party returned to the altar where they were joined with others. In a communal dance with the accompaniment of drum beating. This was done to give a public recognition to Molo as a full fledged Bejari. The villagers too assembled near the dance party and offered arusa-rice and pigeons to Molo to solicit blessing from her. Then Molo with her party moved round the nearby villages in the Mutha to acquire wider public recognition and collected arusa-rice and animals for sacrifice.

Persons in difficulties (such as disease, barrenness, etc.) promise to offer sacrifices to animals after getting proper remedy. They offer these sacrifices during the ceremony which is called Ghanta parish. Ghanta is a small earthen pot in which the offerings are made. When Molo remained busy in moving round the villages, the unmarried young men and women of the village made necessary arrangements for Ghanta Parish. The maize piled up, strewn on the altar and the women decorated the fourth pitcher with red ochre. The art is locally known as 'linga' representing Thakras pemu. Further Puja accessories like plain tanna, edible roots, fragrant sweetmeats and a buffalo were also kept near the altar. The pandei

was well decorated with flowers and mango leaves by the young girls. Each individual brought his or her own Ghanta, Parish pitcher, and puja accessories. All these arrangements were completed by the evening so as to start the parish the next day.

On the 4th day the Gharu and otherwise known festival of the earthen pitchers took place. Kumbh kane and Rumase kane are the two principal deities grouped together as Thakras pemu are worshipped during the occasion. It is believed Thakras pemu is very ferocious and inflicts smallpox on human beings and animals if she is not propitiated. Therefore the families where smallpox had suffered from smallpox worship Bejari and dedicate their children at her feet and salute her with offerings and sacrifice of

On the 4th day Molo and Bejari and the apprentices reached the altar with the drum beaters and the village workers. Each worshipper took a bowl of arusa-rice and other puja accessories on the waist, and either a fowl or pigeon with the right hand. The previous procedure continued. The sacrificed animals like a lamb, a goat, a fowl and a buffalo were brought to the altar one after the other in whom Molo sat for a few seconds, after which these animals were taken



Male in honour of the participants. Persons belonging to the 'Domb' caste were also invited to share the feast. The ceremonies ended with feast. Male thus became a Pat-Bejuni.

Bejuni. All Bejunis cannot afford the expenses of the ceremonies. They cannot therefore attain the status of Pat-Bejuni and have to remain as ordinary Bejunis.

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Women, especially young women, deck themselves with various k...

of ornaments worn on different parts of their persons such as neck, ear nose hand finger waist and ankle.

Silver necklace is known as *Kasari* (Fig. 11). Two types of silver necklaces are found. First is a chain simple and round. The other type is of stringed coins (Fig. 111). Besides the metallic ones a kind of bead necklace known as *Mihava* is also found in use. The beads are small in size and a bunch of stringed beads are worn at a time.

Inserting of earlobe is practised by both the sexes, piercing being done at an early age. In case of females

in upper part of the pinna is also pierced besides the earlobe. The ornaments for the ears are either of brass, silver or gold depending upon the economic condition of the person. The ornaments are very simple (Fig. 12). A plain simple ring, small in size, is used for earlobe. It is known as *Pinna*.

The ornament of the pinna is not simple but slightly twisted and known as *Panna*.

Like ear piercing of nose is also done by both the sexes. A small hole is pierced in the septum of the nose. The ornaments for the nose are generally made of

gold because brass sometimes causes ulcer. The ornaments of the nose is nothing but simple ring known as *Marna* (Fig. 13). The ornament of the septum is known as *Mukh* (Fig. 13). It may be of the same nature or slightly decorated.

Women use ornaments on forearm only. The upper arm remains completely bare. Gold bangles of silver brass or even aluminium are used depending upon the economic condition of a person concerned. The brass bangles and aluminium bangles

and *Raga Pata* respectively (Fig. 14). Bangles may be used in both hands or in one hand according to the nature of an event and the number varies from 1-10. Besides these I have also seen using them plastic bangles known as *Patta*. Women of younger age i.e. below thirty generally use the plastic bangles.

Male folk often use a single silver bangle (Fig. 15). It is known as *Chakra*. It is used in both hands. It is known as *Chakra* (Fig. 15).

Silver rings are worn on the left hand by the female folk only. Insertion of a ring is practised in the middle finger. It is known as *Ring* (Fig. 16).

Children generally use head ornaments. A small gold or silver ornament is worn on the head. It is known as *Head Ornament*. Children generally use head ornaments. The ornaments are of silver or brass. Sometimes they also use blackstring with a few tinkling bells. The silver one known as *Tellinera* is worn by female folk only.

The ornament worn at the ankle is known as *Andu*. It is made of brass. There are two varieties of *Andu*. One type resembles a bangle (Fig. 17). Its inner side is plain and rounded while the outer surface has a curved ridge. More than one *Andu* of this type may be worn at



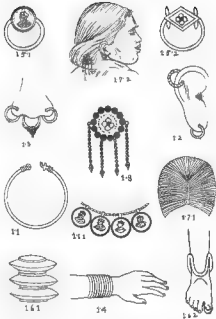


Figure 1. Hairdo and Ornaments of the Kuvī-Khond Women



Figure 2. Tattoo designs of the Kuvi-Khond

a tune. The other type is worn singly (Fig. 142). Two curves are present in this type. Andu is worn only by adult females. Children wear small tinkling bells strunged as a thread known as Mula. The Jura ornaments are sold at the bazaar of the people by the hawkers and they purchased either by cash or by barter. But for the gold and silver ornaments, it is to depend on the man. The adjacent Jura Brass ornaments are purchased from weekly markets or fairs.

### Personal Adornments

1. *Hair*—The people are in habit of shaving the heads of their young ones, irrespective of sex, during the first menstruation period of the mothers after the child birth. From this time onwards complete shaving is not done. Only the frontal portion of the head is shaved while the hair at the backside remains untouched. Shaving is done with a sharp iron instrument similar razor. The mother herself or a woman of the neighbourhood shaves the head of a child. There is no prescribed age for keeping the hair after the fashion of the grassroots. After shaving, the child is quite grownup, i.e. the hair grows out with curly or the girl has a short kumoid a kind of lock of hair. Oil is used for lubricating the hair. A kind of locally available oil is used as detergent to soothe the hair.

2. *Unshaved hair*—In the adult Khasi male is not shaving but tying the bunch of the hair into a knot on the back. The young ones have changed their outlook. They shave their hair like other caste people.

Khasi women comb their hair with wooden combs. They part their hair in the middle (Fig. 171), comb it slowly backwards and gather it into a graceful chignon (Fig. 172) with tresses of false hair on the left side. The tresses of false hair are prepared by themselves from their waste hair. Metal pins known as Thimadera is stuck to the chignon so that the tress may not come out. Thimadera is made of silver (Fig. 173). A long pin is fitted at the centre of a decorative disc. Besides this, small rings hang from the periphery of the disc.

The use of flowers on special occasions such as dancing or marriage ceremony is also noticed.

3. *Hair of women* do not take care of their hair. The hair simply hangs down on the back or tied in a plain knot.

2. *Tattooing*—Tattooing is very popular among the tribe. It is especially popular among young women who consider it as a part of their femininity.

Tattooing is done profusely on the face and hands. The use of both straight and curved lines and geometrical figures is prevalent. The most common design on the face, forehead resembles a trident. The common designs on different parts of the body are shown in figure 2.

3. *Tattooing* is a painful operation and the young women voluntarily submit to the ordeal. A design is chosen by the woman who intends to get her body tattooed. The body is pricked with the help of needles on most designs. The seed for this purpose is collected from

the under surface of earthen ware which are used for cooking. The whole thing is then covered with a layer of oil. The entire process is repeated twice or thrice to make the tattoo marks permanent.

There is no special class of tattooers in Khasi society. Women of the household or neighbourhood help each other.

Application of grey colour on the body or chipping of teeth etc. is not in practice among the Khasi.

### Dress and Adornment

Systematic and intensive data on the dress and ornaments of the different tribes of India are yet to be compiled. However a comparison is made here with the help of existing literature. The Khasi Khasi, a Dravidian speaking tribe under investigation shares a few traits with the Munda speaking tribes also. For example the principal dress of an adult male is loin cloth among the Khasi Khasi, the Asur (Levy 1963), Hos (Dalton 1937), Kharas (Roy and Roy 1937), Koras (Dalton 1937), Mundas (Roy 1942) and the Oraon (Dalton 1937). Of course with the advancement of time and contact with outsiders there is a rapid change in traditional dress. For example stitched clothes have recently been introduced.

The Kharas (Roy and Roy 1937) females use two pieces of loin cloth for covering their body. A Khasi woman (present study) also uses

two pieces of clothes for covering her body. But they use a piece of loin cloth as undergarment for the lower part of the body. The Hos (Majumdar 1950) too, use a loin cloth under the skirt.

In case of ornaments necklace of stringed coconuts is found to be used by both Dravidian and Munda speaking tribes such as the Asur (Levy 1963), Khasi (present study) (Roy 1942) and Santal (Mukherjee 1962). Its distribution is also to be found even among the Gallaungs (Srivastava 1962) of Nepal.

Agua, rings in which coconuts are strung are found to be used by both the Khasi (present study) and Santal (Mukherjee 1962) of Santal Pargana and Manikpur.

The anklet is known by a common term *Anka* among the Hos (Majumdar 1950), Khasi (present study) and Mundas (Roy

The hair-do of the females of different tribes presents an interesting feature. The combed hair gathered as a chignon on one side of the back of the head either right or left is found to occur among the Asur (Levy 1963), Hos (Dalton 1937), Kharas (Roy and Roy 1937), Khasi (present study) and the Santal (Dalton 1937). It also occurs among the Irulas (Lal 1961), a far away Dravidian speaking tribe of Kerala. This style may be of Dravidian origin as the Palis (Lal 1961) of Kerala are also found

to follow the same pattern. As I  
will show, the the Mandan  
speaking tribes are entirely absent  
in South India.

Species Changes among the Holarctic  
Mammals 1940 to the Present  
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[illegible]

present, one borrowed the trait from their Mayan speaking people

In fine, it may be said that from this little study it is not possible to say if the  $\bar{g}$  values are the original or the harmonized or the ratio discussed except in the case of low density and increasing

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Status of the Kuli Caste in the District of Bolangir and Sambalpur

Research Paper of the Tribal Research Bureau Orissa

This report was prepared by Smt. R. Mohapatra in the year 1962 on the basis of field investigation in the districts of Bolangir and Sambalpur. It is hereby submitted to the Tribal Research Bureau, Orissa, for its approval and publication as Research Paper No. 10.

The enquiry about the status of the 'Kuli' caste of Bolangir and Sambalpur was occasioned by a reference from the District Welfare Officer Bolangir in his letter No. 14227 (Dir.) dt. 8-12-1961 on the subject. An idea about the anomalous character of the caste status of the Kuli, pointed out in the said letter may be obtained from the following extracts from it.

"As per notification of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India dated 29-10-1956, publishing the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Classification) Order 1956, the Kulis are classified as Scheduled Tribes and only in respect of Sambalpur district are treated as Scheduled Castes. Some Kulis are found in Bolangir district in Satalda, Lotingha and Agalpur area and they present some interesting features. These Kulis are in a way differentiated from either the Kulis of Sambalpur or the Kulis which pass in as Scheduled Tribes. They are believed to be a subcaste of Mahars which are classified as Scheduled Caste but probably a little more advanced in social hierarchy than them. They do not suffer from the stigma of untoucha-

bility and their social mobility is less than the meshers (Bhallas or Weavers) a class of O. B. C. people.

Certain old documents and judgments relating to the year 1931 of (a) the Maharaja of Sonapur formerly the head of all caste guilds and associations in this region, (b) The Mudbar president of Bargarh and (c) the Ragnir of Patana State are to be found here wherein it has been laid down that the Kulis are not untouchables and are to be served by Brahmins in all their social and religious ceremonies and occasions. This in itself is a rather conspicuous and therefore raised question of the status of Kulis in Bolangir district. The question of descheduledisation or otherwise also is linked up with it. Another peculiarity is that though the Kuli caste is not categorised as aborigine in section 196 of the Patna State Tenancy Act, 1944, in the settlement Khottas they are recorded as Adim Rayals and therefore practically treated as aborigines for purposes of the Tenancy Act. One consequence of this has been that a Scheduled Tribe can transfer immovable property to Kulis

without permission of the Subdivisional Officer without attracting the provisions of section 105 and 106 of the Patta State Tenancy Act read with section 74 (b) of the Orissa merged states (Laws) Act 1956. The position appears to be *amens* *in* *cho* *rem*.

There are a few possibly desirable that the status of Kulis in Bolangir district has to be determined precisely in relation to Scheduled Tribes and Castes and I would therefore urge on you to please take necessary action at your end through your organisation."

A field investigation on the caste status of the Kulis was made during my tour of the Bolangir district from 12-2-1962 to 6-3-1962. In connection with the preparation of handbook on Gonds Data was collected from the Loisinga area of Bolangir district and Bargarh area of Sambalpur district. The findings are presented as follows:

#### The Weaver Castes and the Kulis

The Weaver castes of Sambalpur and Bolangir are divided into seven groups. These seven groups, in spite of their common caste occupation, function as seven distinct castes. These castes are—

1. Bhulla
2. Krushna
3. Dhara
4. Patra
5. Rangin
6. Kuli
7. Ganda

The first four castes weave superior type of clothes. Kuli and Ganda weave inferior and coarse

type of clothes. The Ganda are equivalent to the Pano Caste and are regarded as one of the lowest among the Scheduled Castes. They also have an intimate relationship with the Pano Caste. Patra and Dargal specialise in the weaving of "Pata" or silk clothing. Krushna are specialised in the weaving of "Motha" clothing which is a type of handspun silk different from that of "Pata". All the seven groups except the Ganda are endogamous. Only the Ganda, as has been observed earlier, have inter-caste relationship with the Pano. The rules of endogamy are very strictly observed by all the other six groups. Other caste rules are also observed very strictly. This is characteristic of castes who have specialised caste occupations. The following is a list of the surnames of these castes:

Caste	Surname
Bhulla	Mohar
Krushna	Mohar
Dhara	Dhara
Rangin	Mohar
Kuli	Mohar
Ganda	Numerous surnames

The above list shows that four castes namely the Bhulla, Krushna, Rangin, and Kuli have the same surnames. It is indicative of a past relationship which has been severed in course of time. Though all the castes have adopted weaving as their caste occupation, they specialise in different types of weaving. This specialisation might have been one of the reasons of caste differentiation among them.



It may therefore be maintained that the Kuli form a part and parcel of the weaver caste which has been divided into a number of sub-castes and each of these sub-castes have attained the status of full-fledged castes in course of time. Relationship of the Kulis with other Castes

The relationship of a caste with other castes, especially the Brahmins and other service castes like barber and washerman is a determinant of the status of that particular caste. The relationship of the Kulis with the Brahmins and other castes are given below.

**Brahmins**—Brahmins do not accept water from the Kuli. They also do not ordinarily touch the Kuli but untouchability is not strictly observed. The Brahmins enter their houses and take water from their metal utensils if brought by other people. Brahmin priests also serve in the marriage, mortuary rites and other functions of the Kulis.

**Washerman**—The washerman washes the clothes of the Kulis. They even wash the clothes of the women worn during menstruation which is regarded as polluted clothing.

**Barber**—The Barber cuts the hair of the Kulis and also shaves them.

**Gour**—The Gour (cowherd) does not accept water from the Kulis but they mix freely with them and no untouchability is observed by them.

**Kulata**—The Kulatas are a cultivating caste whose status is equivalent to that of the Chams of the coastal areas. They do not

accept water from the Kuli but freely mix with them and no untouchability is observed.

**Gando**—The Gando accept water from the Kuli but the Kuli do not accept water from them. The latter regard the Gando as a very inferior caste and treat them as untouchables.

**Occupation**—The sole occupation of the Kuli is weaving. They have absolutely no other economic pursuit. Agriculture is a subsidiary occupation for a very small fraction of people. Less than 1% of the Kulis own some land and in no case the holding is more than 2 acres.

Weaving constitutes a number of phases. Both the sexes participate in this. Some types of work are specially allotted to men some to women and some to both. A normal couple by working to their utmost ability can weave twenty pieces of standard size cloth per month. (The standard size of clothes in the locality is very small. This may be valued between 80 and 90 rupees. A couple can weave twenty pieces of clothing only under ideal conditions but as they have to face a number of difficulties such as lack of capital and market, the limit does not exceed 12 pieces when there is heavy demand. The demand is ordinarily very low throughout the year. Therefore the output of the weavers is between 1 to 2 pieces of standard clothes per month. Thus the income of an average family may be considered as extremely low not exceeding thirty rupees per month. Apart from their poverty, the Kuli may be treated as economically

distressed. During the past fifteen years they have gradually lost their market. Handwoven cloth has gradually been replaced by mill-made cloth. In spite of its superior artistic quality the hand woven cloth has not been able to stand the competition with the latter. The Kuls have been more hard hit because they specialise in coarse and inferior type of cloth which is generally used by the poorer section of the people. These people now find the price of the clothes produced by the Kuls rather prohibitive. The pursuit of weaving as an occupation has made the Kuls an easy going people. They are seen to sit or stand under the shade and doing work lazily. This has made them extremely immobile as far as occupation is concerned because they cannot stand the hardships of other occupations like labour and cultivation.

**Education**—The percentage of literacy among the Kuls is not more than 20 per cent. Compared to their caste or economic status this may seem to be a very high proportion but actually it is not so because most of the people who declared themselves as literate knew nothing except signing their names. In the whole area there were only 5 persons who had read up to the Middle English standard and there were only two who had passed High School Certificate Examination, the highest educational achievement found among the Kuls.

**The Kuli As a Tribe**—The Kulis are fully integrated with the caste hierarchy of the Hindu society. They accept the superiority of the Brahmins, have functional relationship with other castes and have a rigidly fixed caste occupation. They worship the gods of the Hindus and have no separate gods or goddesses. They do not take such food and indulge in such practices which are prohibited for Hindus. Rather they behave like high castes in this respect.

enclosed in the back of the above is the following to which may be drawn —

1. There is no reason to justify the Kuli being treated as a tribe.
2. The Kuls have the status of a Scheduled Caste but in that respect they occupy a position superior to other Scheduled Castes. A slight stigma of touchability is now attached to them but they are likely to be cleared up of this in near future.

**Recommendation**—It is therefore recommended that the Kulis should be treated as a Scheduled Caste in both Sambalpur and Bolangir districts. They may be declassified after a period of five years by which time they would have achieved a status equivalent to other backward classes.

# Social Status of the Ujias of Orissa

Research Report of the Tribal Research Bureau, Orissa

(This report was prepared in the year 1955 by Scientist, Kamesh Chandra Das, Research Officer, Tribal Research Bureau. The contents of this report were in April 1956 the subject of a paper at the Life Commission.)

## 1 Introduction

The Ujias have been regarded as a scheduled caste in Orissa. The basis of reference of this report is to ascertain whether their social status entitles them to be entitled as a scheduled tribe. This report is based on the field investigation conducted in the months of February and May 1955. The study was conducted mainly in four villages namely Badhambal, Badhambal, Badhambal and Badhambal in Balasore district. A few Ujias of Orissa were also interviewed for cross-checking. Mainly the interview method was adopted for

study in addition to observation and collection of Scheduled information in this report attempts have been made to show in brief their social status in the light of the present social conditions.

The first part of this report deals with the Ujias of Badhambal area showing their relationship with other caste people living there. In the second part a comparison has been made between the Ujias of Orissa with their counterpart in the social

## 2 Population of the Ujias

The Ujias are mainly concentrated in the districts of Balasore and Mayurbhanj. Their distribution according to 1951 census is as follows:

Name of the district (1)	Total population (2)	Male (3)	Female (4)
Sambalpur	15	8	7
Badhambal (Phulbani)	1	1	0
Cuttack	20	12	8
Mayurbhanj	1,297	696	601
Balasore	5,081	2,544	2,537
Total	6,414	3,261	3,153

The above table shows that the main concentration of the Ujias is in the districts of Balasore 78-81 per cent and Mayurbhanj 70-74 per cent. Though fewer in Cuttack, Puri and Sausalpur their population in these districts is significant.

In Balasore district their main occupation is fishing and they are chiefly found in coastal areas. In Mayurbhanj district they are concentrated in the areas adjacent to rivers.

The Ujia name might have taken its origin from the term Ujan i.e. to go against the current. It was perhaps a war tradition to go against the current while catching fish. This view is recorded in the Census of Mayurbhanj State, 1931 if ever it was a tradition. It is not in vogue now.

### 3. The Ujia of Ballapal area

Like many other Scheduled Caste the Ujias consider their caste name as degrading. They designate as Danda Chhetra but this is a pretence of their community according to the census of Mayurbhanj, 1931.

As regards the origin of the name Danda Chhetra Majhi the Ujias have a legend that their ancestors held a Danda Chhetra royal umbrella during the coronation of Lord Ramachandra. A different version of the story is that the umbrella was held to protect him from scorching heat of the sun while he was crossing a river in a boat during his exile.

The other sections are Amara Nagi or Bagmati and probably Badi. But the Ujias could not tell anything about other sections. However these names have been collected separately in the Scheduled Caste list. More information could not be collected regarding these sections.

The Ujias of Balasore claim to be the original inhabitants of this locality. Their mother tongue is Oriya. There is no evidence that they ever spoke any other language. The Ujias live in multicasite villages among such caste groups as Kaula Raja Jati, Kandan Mahi Khanda yet etc. Their dwellings sometimes form a separate cluster in the village. In the social scale they occupy an anomalous status as untouchable. It was reported even recently their touch was considered as polluting by the upper caste Hindus. So, they used to get the services of the washerman and outcasted Brahmin. The barber used to put their heads out and to shave them or cut their hair. Their low status has been mitigated to some extent. Their touch is no longer considered as polluting by the Brahmans and Khadayats. Water and food dry and pakka are not accepted from the Ujias by these caste groups. The Ujias from their side consider some other scheduled castes like Pano, Kandan and Badi as lower in status and do not accept water or food from them.

The Ujia community is divided into several sections called Gots. These include Banaat a bird, Nagewer (Cobra), Pingasa (a bird), Gundicha a bird etc. The

gotta members abstain from killing or doing any harm to the birds or reptiles associated with the gotta. The Brahmin priest recites the gotta of his Ujia clients, while conducting marriage and worship. It is curious that unlike other castes and tribes they do not maintain gotta progeny. They have a number of practices such as Dakṣa, Mangara, Kṣatriya, Bhera, Paltapal, Patra, Kanhar, Dandapal, etc.

A *gana* in the Ujia community is composed of a number of families whose members are descendants from a common ancestor. They recognise it till their ancestry is remembered. All members of the community living in one village or nearby villages are required observe death and birth pollution in common.

A family is the smallest unit in the social organisation of the Ujias. It is patrilineal, patrilocal and patrilineal. Mostly families are nuclear in composition. Occasionally a family may include one of the parents or unmarried brothers and sisters. In the surveyed villages 87 out of 721 families were found to be nuclear. As regards the size of the family it was observed that medium sized family (4 to 6 members) predominates in the Ujia community. Their number is 58 out of 721 of total families. The number of small sized families (1 to 3 members) is about 18 and that of large sized (7 to 9 members) families is 14. The number of very large sized family (10 and above members) is only 3.

The life cycle of an individual in the Ujia community includes many

rites and rituals among which pregnancy, child birth, marriage and death rites are important. During pregnancy period a Ujia woman like women of other neighbouring communities observes various taboos and restrictions in order to protect herself and the foetus from various assumed dangers. When a pregnant woman has labour pain a professional midwife is called for to help. After delivery she cuts the umbilical cord with the shell of a gourd. The placenta of the first child is buried inside the labour room where as those of succeeding children are thrown away. After delivery both mother and child take bath in tepid water and a barber woman is asked to part off hairs of the mother to remove birth pollution partially. The period of pollution however continues for 21 days. During this period the mother observes certain food taboos. Placenta or birth purification ceremony is held on the 21st day after child birth. For this occasion Ujias like other communities plaster walls with cowdung and throw away used earthen pots. The service of washerman is required to clean the clothings. The mother after placenta is allowed to enter in to kitchen where their ancestral spirits are believed to reside. In the evening the mother accompanies the midwife to the bank of the river or pond to worship the goddess *Korbi* who is associated with child birth. The midwife offers cakes sweet milk rice to the deity saying a long life for the new born baby.

The Ujias in Birtapal area invite a Jewish (an astrologer) to calculate the position of the stars and

their influences on the child on the 3rd day of child birth. On the basis of the alphabets calculated by the Jyotish the parents or other relatives select a name for the child.

The Ujjas prefer child marriage and this is also practised by other communities living in Ballapal. The rate of child marriage has decreased now due to the imposition of Hindu marriage act. Girls usually get married at the age of 13 to 18 and boys in between 18 to 20 years. It is highly objectionable to marry cross cousins as they are regarded as brothers and sisters. Junior levirate and junior sororate are allowed by which a woman can marry her husband's younger brother and a man his wife's younger sister.

The only recognized form of marriage prevalent among the Ujjas in Ballapal area is arranged marriage. Proposal for marriage usually comes from parents of the boy. Preliminary enquiries are made from both sides regarding the eligibility of the prospective mates and the economic condition of their parents. Proposals are finalised when the brideprice is agreed upon. Not only the Ujjas but some other Hindu communities also have tradition of paying bride price.

Wages at once are finalised on an appointed day when the father of the boy alongwith some other relatives proceeds to the girl's place. There, the father or guardian of both of the boy and the girl take oath to get their son and daughter married. After the oath taking ceremony is over the boy's

father pays up the brideprice. Then both the parties in consultation with an astrologer fix a auspicious day for the celebration of the marriage. The boy and the girl at their respective homes take ceremonial bath associated with turmeric paste and oil. Next day the bridegroom with his friends and relatives proceeds to the village of the girl where the marriage ceremony takes place. Sometimes when he goes a day earlier the bridegroom takes the ritual bath at the girl's place. The latter type incurs less expenditure and is usually preferred.

The rites in connection with the marriage ceremony among the Ujjas are almost similar to those of the clean caste Hindus like the Pundarval. The bride and the bridegroom are taken to the marriage booth. Lower-caste Brahmins perform their hands meeting vedic mantras before married life. The girl's parents entertain the groom's party with a feast. After this the bridegroom and his party return home with the bride.

The Chaudh ceremony is held on the tenth day after marriage to restore a ceremonial right to the bride to exercise the ancestral spirit of her husband. The Jyotish and the Brahmin officiate in this ceremony and perform it in accordance with the rules prescribed for clean caste Hindus. Here both the bride and the bridegroom offer raw rice to the ancestors of the groom. If a girl marries before attaining puberty the ceremony is held after her first menstruation.

In the practice of divorce the Ujias differ from caste Hindus. Other Scheduled Caste living in the area also allow divorce. Widows and divorced women are permitted to remarry.

There is little difference in the observance of death ceremony between the clean castes and Ujias though the latter group prefer burial rather than cremation to avoid the extra expenditure on purchase of timber wood and performance of other rites. Members of the community living in that village assemble in the house of the dead and make necessary arrangements to take the corpse to the burial ground. The dead-body is taken according to Hindu custom on a bier made of 6 bamboos. In the burial ground cooked food is offered to the dead and then kept in a pit. The eldest son lifts a fire with wick saturated with ghee and puts it in the mouth of the dead. In case of cremation he lifts the pyre with it. When cremation or burial is over all people who followed the procession return to the village after taking bath in a nearby river or tank. Next day the lineage members partake of a rice meal spiced with neem leaves.

The Ujias of Ballapal observe death pollution 7 days for the unmarried and ten days for the married. The spirit of the dead is believed to haunt the house till final death ceremony is over. Rice and curry are offered on the 3rd, 5th and 7th day after the death to appease the spirit. At the conclusion of the ceremony houses are plastered with cowdung

and the earthen cooking pots in the house are discarded. Clothes are washed by washermen. The barber paros off, cuts hair of the mourners before they take the purificatory bath. Haircut is confined only to male members.

The death ceremony of a married person is observed elaborately. The man priest (outcasted) conducts a ritual on the 10th day for the final purificatory ceremony. A number of outcasted Brahmins are fed on the eleventh day.

The first annas, Sradha is held after one year. It may take place on the 12th day or after 2 months.

Ujias' houses or Ballapal area ordinarily consist of one room, rectangular in size with one door and it is divided into two apartments by a wall. The outer apart-

ment is used as a living room and the inner portion is used as kitchen. Persons living with parents or married brothers have two rooms. The well-to-do families usually construct a boundary wall to maintain privacy. There are separate cowsheds for the cattle.

The dress and ornament of the Ujias are almost identical with those of their neighbours. Males wear a Garuchha or naphia reaching up to knees and old torn clothies while at work but put on better type of Dhoti, Garji and shirt when they visit their relatives. Women use mill made or handloom sarees measuring 8 to 10 cubits in length. As a matter of daily habit

which wear only glass bangles while on festival occasions they adorn their body with silver anklets, armlets, waist chain and bangles. They also use golden nose rings. Their hairstyle is not different from their neighbours.

The household articles of the Ujias of Ballapal are scanty. A few earthen pots, aluminium and brass vessels and silver metal a few iron implements and fishing appliances are all they have. Earthen pots are used for cooking, fetching water and preserving dry fish. Iron implements are used for miscellaneous cutting purposes. Fishing implements play a significant role in their livelihood. These include a Sandada, a wooden bar with a sharp end to dig earth for raising a ridge across the flowing water; Kade, a wooden plate of a trapezium shape; Khauch, (unwired baskettrap), and a variety of basket traps and small nets. Few can afford to purchase or prepare big nets for heavy fishing. Cultivators have a few agricultural implements like plough, rake and spade.

Island fishing is the traditional occupation of the Ujias. They depend on it for the large part of the year. The amount of earning from fish varies from time to time depending on the quantity of catch per day. They usually catch small fish with the help of basket traps and small nets. The income from fishing is insufficient to meet the cost of living. As a result they also depend on wage earning. The Kachias and the Jachias who are fishermen by profession are found in the same locality. They catch fish by

means of nets and boats in the river Subarnarekha flowing through the heart of Ballapal and in the sea nearby while the Ujias use only primitive type of implements and confine their endeavour to capture fishes in it. They do not have the means to purchase nylon cord assumed thread for making big nets. Recently a few of them have taken to sea fishing. These people are able to get employment for about 4 months from the month October to January which is the season for marine fishing. The number of Ujias practicing sea fishing is 6 in the Panchmarakha and about 30 in Nayabali village. Most of them have recently run into debt for purchasing marine fishing net and have outstanding loans varying from Rs. 200 to Rs. 400.

The Ujias of Ballapal mostly work as agricultural labourers. Daily wages vary from Rs. 2 in peak agricultural season to about Rs. 1.30 on ordinary days. A few work on an annual contract. In this case they get remuneration amounting Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 per month in addition to food and shelter.

The Ujias have almost subsistence economy. Most of them do not possess any landed property. As per the survey in two villages of Ballapal, about 42 households out of a total 72 were landless, 29 households have less than 1 acre of land and only one had a holding above 1 acre but below 2 acres. A very few families also work as share croppers.



Animal rearing among the Ujja also indicates their poverty. As per the survey in Balipada about 24 households out of 72 possess about 15 bullocks, 11 cows and 13 goats in total. Rice is the staple food of the Ujja like other cast communities in their region.

They take it 2 to 3 times a day. Dry fish, fish, tamarind and coconut (usually des) or curry provide additional dishes. Their diet rarely contains any milk, milk products or meat. Both males and females chew tobacco dust. Males also smoke beedi and pipe. Country made tiger

Division of labour is primarily based on sex. Women do all household work like cooking, sweeping the floor, plastering walls, washing, clearing utensils, fetching water, breaking paddy etc. Fishermen, fishing, wage earning as day labourers come within the male sphere. It is interesting to note that old and elderly women continue fishing with basket traps or small round nets and sell the catches in the market though they consider it degrading to work as wage labourers. Prestige value is attached to fishing. Legendary evidence of Parbat, the consort of Siva once doing fishing, is cited to prove the sanctity of the trade.

Literacy is very low among the people. Only 22 males out of 144 male population and 4 females out of 133 are literate. Among the literates 10 males are of the L.F. standard and 2 of the M.E. standard. The percentage of literacy is 0.05 which is below the percentage of State average literacy among the Scheduled Castes.

The Ujja have strong faith in Hindu Gods and Goddesses. To ward off any danger or to gain a material prosperity they worship deities called *Bastha*, *Siva*, *Laxmi*, and village deities such as *Manjari*, *Hirani*, *Siddhi* etc. Offerings of fruits are made to the higher deities in the shrines through Brahmin priests.

The village deities are worshipped communally by the villagers belonging to different communities. The priest who worships them is known as *Dehuti*. He usually comes from low caste Hindus. In the village Parachurahi the tutelary deities known as *Vina*, *Siddhi*, *Hirani* and *Manjari* are worshipped by a *Dehuti* belonging to Jati caste. In Nayabati the priest comes from the Ujja caste. Prescribed rituals are performed on the first day of Oriya month. However the common pattern of worship. Special rituals are performed when there is an outbreak of epidemics like cholera, small-pox etc.

In order to appease the ancestral deities the Ujja observe *Vastha* ceremonies twice a year. *Paina* festival is held in the month of Kartika (October-November) on the day of Kalpaja when other Hindu communities propitiate their ancestors. *Paina* sticks (dried cotton plant) are lighted to receive the ancestors in imitation of other communities. Balipada is offered through the Brahmin on behalf of the Ujja for the same purpose on the first day of the Oriya month of Baisakh (April-May) on the bank of a river. This is however not

observed by other clean castes. Fried rice flour are offered on this occasion. Besides these rituals which are held at the lineage level the Ujias also observe Śrādhā ceremony at the family level and offer annual homage to their ancestral spirits.

The deity *Kobakata* is associated with fishing and hence is worshipped by the Ujia, Kouta and Jati. Whenever they catch fish in the sea or in a dangerous water tank they offer the biggest fish of the first catch to *Kobakata* with a view to overcome any apprehension over danger.

*Kongo Devi* is considered as the deity of the sea and only those Ujias who have adopted marine fishing participate with other fishermen to worship this goddess. The festival is held in the month of January–February just after the sea fishing for the year is over. All the seafishermen worship her as *group*.

Rituals for sowing, harvesting of paddy etc. are observed by the Ujias who practise cultivation.

Besides these festivals the Ujias of Ballapal also observe other Hindu festivals like *Rajya Ganesh*, *Vakar* etc.

It was reported that previously the Ujias had a caste organisation to decide the disputes relating to their social life. It does not exist now-a-days. The village council composed of all important elderly members of the village including Ujias and other castes,

deals with all socio-economic and religious affairs.

#### 4. The Ujias of Udia area

Due to the stigma attached to the name of Ujia in Ballapal, area members of the community designate themselves as *Dandya chattri Majhi* which is either a section of or synonym for their caste. In spite of this they have not discarded their traditional occupation in Udia area. The Ujias have assumed the tribal status of the Savars. They are easily distinguishable from the Ujias of Ballapal by their occupation and various customs and practices. Origin is traced from *Hirabhau* the great Savara King who is believed to be the first devotee of Lord Jagannath of Puri. Ujias not known as to why they have not identified themselves with any upper Hindu caste to elevate their status. Other communities recognise them as Ujias and they themselves also confess this when taken into confidence.

The physical and social surrounding in Udia area is quite different from Ballapal. The villages where intensive study was conducted are situated close to the forest and Simlipal. Many Hinduised tribal groups like Rathodis, Bhuiyans and non-Hinduised groups like Santals, Hos, Kolhas etc. constitute the majority in the area.

The Ujias who were interviewed during field investigations could not tell anything regarding their migration from any other place. It may be presumed that they have

migrated from Balesore where they are heavily concentrated.

Like their counterparts in Bahawal the Ujias of Uda also enjoy the de facto status of a caste. The barber and washerman have been serving the community since long Brahmins who serve them are not catercasted. They have replaced the Jyotshi who formerly served as the priest. In spite of all these factors the upper caste Hindus and Hind seed tribes do not accept cooked food or water from them. On the other hand the Ujias consider the Scheduled castes like Patwa, Hadia, Doma and Scheduled Tribes such as Ho, Kachha, Sarais, Markandia etc. as lower to them and do not inter-dine with them.

The social structure of the Ujia here is based on Gurus at the apex and family at the base. Except Nagawar and Bawaria other type of Gurus are not found in Bahawal and about here. They have some other Gurus such as Padhalala, a wild animal and Sarawar, a bird etc.

Marriage is strictly prohibited among the lineage members. Here the Ujias recognise kin relationships up to three generations instead of more probably to offer a wider scope for marriage in the community whose population is small. Nuclear form of family is more in abundance. Out of 45 surveyed families about 30 belong to this group. The joint extended and other type of families are quite negligible numbering about 14 and 1 respectively. As regards size of the family it is noted that medium sized family is more common. Next in importance is the small size

family. Their number is 24 and 14 respectively. Next comes large-sized family whose number is about 7. The very large sized family numbers only one. This is also the common pattern in Bahawal area.

The difference in surnames has been recorded in two areas. Except Patwa, which is found common others are Tagetta, Pata, Panipatra, Satrasalya, Khatola, Nayak, Bantakar, Pradhan, Dagarlag. Most of these imply the titles of the service holders under a feudatory king.

The rites and rituals in connection with the social life of the Ujias have been little affected by tribal influence. They follow their traditions, customs in death, marriage and birth ceremonies. Rather they have gone a step forward than the Ujias of Bahawal in the social mobility by getting the service of a high class Brahmin. Along with the traditional customs they have also absorbed a few tribal traits differing specially in the ancestors on the occasion of marriage ceremonies offering of an egg to the Mother Vajal, carrying a wing life for new born baby etc. are a few such instances. Another striking feature is the prevalence of love marriage as well as to their traditional form of negotiation marriage. Younger girls meet each other and have love affairs while they roam in forests in search of fruits, roots and herbs.

The nomadic life of the Ujias has been greatly affected due to change in physical surroundings. It is not worthy to mention the occupational mobility. Even in the same area variations in main occupations are observed. The Ujias

who inhabit Podaditha area close to the Samilpal live on forest collection where as those who live settled down further away from this area depend on wage earning for their livelihood.

The forest clad Samilpal Hill is of immense help to the Ujias of Podaditha area providing ample opportunity to procure forest products. Except for transplanting and harvesting time when they get work in the village or as day labourer, the Ujias spend most of their time in collecting forest product. Their collections include honey, turmeric, resin, tamarind, Mahula, Palus, Asakbark, Sunari Bark, Rumosa seeds, Mahula seeds etc. These articles are sold to the Government contractors and in the weekly markets. Usually they get down from the hills on each weekly market day to sell their forest procurements and purchase daily necessities. Next day they again proceed to the forest. The local tribes like Rathodis, Santals, Kolhas etc. do not depend so much on forests as the Ujias.

The Ujias are found engaged in wage earning as well as in agricultural operations. Some of them possess landed property. Out of 45 surveyed households about 28 belong to landless group while 11 households have land up to one acre, 4 have in between 1.1 to 3.0 acres and 2 have within 3.1 to 5.0 acres. A few families also cultivate land on share cropping basis. As regards cattle wealth, the position of the Ujias here is worse than that

of Ballapal area. Out of 45 house holds only 5 households have 7 cows, 3 bullocks and 7 goats in total. In addition to these they keep fowls to meet the demand of their religious practices.

The Ujias of Podaditha area get opportunity for hunting and catching birds while they stay in the forest. Usually they hunt by help of bow and arrow. Birds not only provide meat but also bring them cash money. They are entraped by bamboo splits tied with gum which are put on the bough of the trees. Those birds which can be domesticated are sold in the market.

The Ujias have almost dropped out their traditional occupation of fishing. Only occasionally they catch fish in tanks, agricultural fields and rivers like other non fisherman communities.

The Ujias engage in the proper occupation of the area due to the collection of forest products as they do not work as day labourers. Hence they earn wages as day labourer working in agricultural field, in construction of roads and buildings and also engage themselves in domestic work. Collection of forest produce, trading and fishing are occasional additions to their earnings.

Thus the occupational pattern in different areas is not the same. The major sources of income in order of importance in different areas are as follows:

Ballapal area	Podaditha	Uda Area	Uda Proper
1. Wage earning	Forest collection		Wage earning
2. Fishing	Wage earning	-	Cultivation
3. Cultivation	Cultivation	-	Forest collection

It is found that the fishing, the traditional occupation of the Ujja occupies the second place in Balasopal areas whereas in other areas it is not at all a major source of earning.

In Padadiba, Ujja women are a great help to their husbands. They participate in economic pursuits. Collection of turmeric, palus, green leaves, etc., and preparation of palus flour from the tuber are done by females. They also earn wages as day labourers and help their husbands in agricultural operations. The males do all these works alongwith hunting, collection of honey, fishing and catching birds etc.

Most of the Ujja have one roomed dwellings. It is partitioned in the middle to make two apartments. All the houses are thatched and built of wood. The household equipments consist of hunting and food gathering materials in addition to a few brass and aluminium utensils, palm leaf mats, string bed, cutting and ploughing implements, etc. They do not possess a variety of fishing implements.

The dress and ornaments of the Ujja are the same as the local non-tribals. They speak Oriya as their mother tongue. Their physical appearance is quite unlike the local tribal people.

The field investigations evidently show that Ujja do not receive much interest in education. Out of 22 males only 16 literate without educational standard and 3 have come up to L. P. standard. Among 109 females only one has passed L. P. examination. The percentage of literacy is 2.1 which is even

below the standard of literacy than the Ujja of Balasopal.

Due to the impact of tribal religion the religious beliefs and practices of Ujja have undergone a considerable change. They have strong faith in both tribal and non-tribal deities. Hindu higher gods and goddesses are worshipped if somebody makes a vow. Barua, a tribal deity, is regarded as very powerful. He is to be propitiated each year for their wellbeing. Shrines for the deity are to be found in some villages in Ujja proper. In Padadiba area they appease Him by sacrificing goats, fowls, etc., in the forest in the month of Chaitra (March-April) before they start collecting honey. The Ujja pantheon includes a number of deities, which are worshipped by the Rathudi tribe. The Dehuri who worships deities called Athara Deuri installed on the foot of the Simlipal on behalf of the inhabitants of this area at an interval of a few years, belongs to Ujja caste. The inhabitants of the villages situated nearby contribute for the festival. The Athara Deuri deities have taken their names after Rathudi deities installed on the top of Simlipal.

The village tutelary deities are considered as the common deity for all castes and tribes living in the village. Hence co-operation of all communities is prime necessity for their worship. The village priest called Dehuri usually belongs to a caste or tribe, considered as lower in status than the clean caste. The Dehuri of Badajhampal is a Khandusa Gauda whereas as in Gandider he is a Kolia. The Ujja co-operate and contribute

with others when any ritual is observed.

The most important village festival, *Amba Nambila* (New mango-partaking ceremony) otherwise known as *Dallapala* is held in the month of *Chitra* (March-April). The villagers bring *Sa* (bough ceremonially from the forest and plant it before the tabernary deity. On that day goats and fowls are sacrificed to appease these deities. They also offer some green mangoes which are distributed among the villagers after the festival is over. On that day the villagers offer green mango to their ancestors after which they are allowed to take it. Besides this, *Sa*linga is observed at the village level in the month of *Aswina* (September-October). A basketful of *sand* is ceremonially brought from the river bank and kept before the village deity for 7 to 9 days. Paddy plants and young and bird seeds are sown on it. These are ceremonially thrown away after germination. About 7 fowls are sacrificed to propitiate the village deity for this occasion.

The *Ujias* follow the ritual procedure of sacrificing animals. The ritual spot is plastered with cowdung and then the priest or head of the family, as the case may be, applies vermilion in the name of several deities, including *Bhama* (mother-earth), *Dharm Deula* (Sun god), *Kavum*, etc., and keeps *gana, arna*, or (San-fried, baked

paddy) in heaps. The goats or fowls are then allowed to partake these rice grains after which they are sacrificed in the name of the concerned deities.

In addition to these festivals mentioned above the *Ujias* also observe some Hindu festivities like *Raja*, *Ganba*, *Makar*, etc.

As regards ancestor worship it was noted that they observe the traditional *Sradha* ceremony to appease the ancestral spirits each year on the day of their death. *Paina Sradha* and *Dallapala* are however not observed in this area. But when the new mango and new rice partaking ceremonies are observed they offer these first to their ancestors.

The *Ujias* here do not have any organized caste assembly like those at Ballapal. The Village Panchayat including elderly members from *Ujia* and non-*Ujia* groups decide the cases relating to socio-economic affairs.

Thus it is found from the foregoing pages that a great deal of tribal traits have made their way in to *Ujia* community in *Uda* area.

### 5. Conclusion :

In the light of the above findings it may be concluded that the *Ujias* may continue in the list of Scheduled Caste until they are sufficiently advanced both socially and economically.

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